

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1           1.     A handheld computing device, comprising:  
2                 a housing;  
3                 a processor supported by the housing;  
4                 a wireless telephony device coupled to the processor;  
5                 a display having a graphical user interface coupled to the  
6     processor; and  
7                 a plurality of input keys;  
8                 wherein the device is programmed to effectuate a  
9     predetermined communications connection when a user depresses two or  
10    more input keys simultaneously.
- 1           2.     The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the  
2     predetermined communications connection is effectuated by dialing a  
3     predetermined telephone number.
- 1           3.     The handheld computing device of Claim 2, wherein the  
2     predetermined number is the number for an emergency service.
- 1           4.     The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the user  
2     must depress and hold the two or more input keys for greater than one  
3     second to effectuate the predetermined communications connection.
- 1           5.     The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the user  
2     must depress four input keys simultaneously to effectuate the  
3     predetermined communications connection.
- 1           6.     The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the  
2     device effectuates the predetermined communications connection  
3     regardless of whether the wireless telephony device is powered on.

1           7.     The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the  
2     device effectuates the predetermined communications connection  
3     regardless the state of the software operating on the device.

1           8.     The handheld computing device of Claim 3, wherein the  
2     device calls the emergency service by dialing 9-1-1.

1           9.     The handheld computing device of Claim 3, wherein the  
2     device calls the emergency service by dialing 1-1-2.

1           10.    The handheld computing device of Claim 1, further  
2     comprising:  
3                a plurality of navigation buttons, wherein the device is  
4     programmed to effectuate the predetermined communications connection  
5     when a combination of the navigation buttons and the input keys is  
6     depressed simultaneously.

1           11.    A method of making an emergency request, comprising the  
2     steps of:  
3                providing a handheld computing device having wireless  
4     communication capability and having two or more user input devices; and  
5                activating two or more user input devices simultaneously,  
6     whereby the device effectuates a communications channel to an  
7     emergency service.

1           12.    The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,  
2     further comprising the step of:  
3                activating the two or more input devices for at least one  
4     second.

1           13. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,  
2 wherein the user must activate four input devices simultaneously to  
3 effectuate the communications channel to the emergency service.

1           14. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,  
2 wherein the device effectuates the communications channel to the  
3 emergency service regardless of the state of any software operating on  
4 the device.

1           15. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,  
2 wherein the communications channel is a telephone connection to an  
3 emergency service made by dialing 9-1-1.

1           16. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,  
2 wherein the communications channel is a telephone connection to an  
3 emergency service made by dialing 1-1-2.

1           17. The method of placing an emergency call of Claim 11,  
2 further comprising the steps of:  
3                 providing a plurality of navigation buttons and user input  
4 keys, wherein the device is programmed to effectuate the  
5 communications channel when a combination of the navigation buttons  
6 and the user input devices are depressed simultaneously.

1           18. A method of programming a handheld computer having a  
2 hardware abstraction layer, an operating system, and wireless  
3 communication capability to call an emergency service in response to user  
4 input, comprising the steps of:  
5                 programming the hardware abstraction layer to direct the  
6 operating system to dial the emergency service when a user activates a  
7 certain combination of input devices simultaneously.

1           19. The method of programming a handheld computer of Claim  
2           18, wherein the certain combination of input devices includes the  
3           depression of four keys.

1           20. The method of programming a handheld computer of Claim  
2           18, wherein the user must activate the certain combination of input  
3           devices for greater than one second.

1           21. A handheld computer, comprising:  
2           a processor;  
3           a display including a touch screen coupled to the processor;  
4           a plurality of user input keys coupled to the processor;  
5           a wireless telephony device coupled to the processor; and  
6           an operating system running on the processor;  
7           whereby the operating system is configured to call an  
8           emergency service when two or more user input keys are pressed  
9           simultaneously.

1           22. The handheld computer of Claim 21, wherein the handheld  
2           computer does not include a mechanical telephone keypad.

1           23. The handheld computer of Claim 21, wherein the emergency  
2           service is called when four input keys are depressed simultaneously.

1           24. The handheld computer of Claim 23, wherein the input keys  
2           must be depressed simultaneously for at least one second.